

St Nicolas' Church of England Voluntary Aided  
Combined School



## Teaching and Learning Policy

### St Nicolas' Church of England School Vision

***Jesus said 'I am the vine and you are the branches'.***

Our school is rooted in the Christian Faith. Nourished by God, we want to grow together, drawing on His strength to live out our Christian values so that we can reach out to others in our community.

We are all unique and together with God we want to be the best that we can be. As we learn together in a supportive and nurturing school, we will thrive and be ready to face the challenges of life.

### Our Christian Values:

love/friendship    respect    honesty    courage    thankfulness    peace

Date of Policy: Autumn 2022

Review date: Autumn 2024

### Members of staff responsible:

Headteacher

Deputy headteacher

This teaching and learning policy links with other relevant school policies including curriculum, assessment, feedback and marking, behaviour, anti-bullying, SEND, equality and cohesion, and more.

### Aim

The aim of this policy is to explain to school staff, governors, parents and others with an interest in the school how teaching and learning is organised at St Nicolas'.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1**

At St Nicolas' CE School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. We promote children's spiritual awareness; nurturing young citizens of the world in an environment which encourages everyone to understand themselves and others, where children feel safe, valued and appreciated. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. Through a holistic and inclusive approach, we will deliver a balanced curriculum which celebrates everyone's gifts, talents and achievements in an atmosphere of safety, fairness and creativity. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

### **2.1**

We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities.

### **2.2**

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners by nurturing their growth mindset;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- use questions to deepen understanding and provide opportunities for discussion and collaboration because we believe dialogue and language are central to learning;
- encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- help pupils develop an understanding of the teachings of the Christian faith and to be aware of and respect other peoples' beliefs and faiths.
- show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

## **3 Effective learning**

### **3.1**

We acknowledge that we all learn in different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. This is considered when planning, teaching and learning occurs.

### **3.2**

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research;
- paired and group work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- peer evaluation;
- asking and answering questions;
- reviewing mistakes and misconceptions;
- use of technology;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- responding to music, film and other recorded material;
- discussion, role-play and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

### **3.3**

We encourage children to actively take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

## **4 Effective teaching (quality first teaching)**

### **4.1**

Our teachers make a special effort to establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. Teachers create an inclusive learning environment adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management, including use of the stop signal. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct. We expect all children to comply with these rules to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy.

### **4.2**

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe and that relevant parental permissions are sought.

### **4.3**

Effective planning and lesson design is the starting point for quality first teaching and learning. Effective planning is based on knowing where the pupils are in their learning through assessment for learning, use of data as well as knowledge of specific needs.

### **4.4** Our quality first teaching incorporates:

- Highly focused lesson design with clear objectives
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Appropriate use of questioning, modelling and explaining on the part of the teacher
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils

Some of our teaching strategies:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Reviewing and promoting investigation and problem solving | Frequent reviewing strengthens connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees up working memory for problem solving, creativity and increases responsibility for their own learning.                         |
| questioning   | Teaching, demonstrating, and asking questions is planned and carefully sequenced, to determine how well the material is being learned and to promote higher order thinking skills.  |
| Modelling and explaining                                  | This is more than demonstrating. Through the teacher 'thinking aloud' and explaining, it helps pupils understand underlying structures, processes and conventions. This gives pupils cognitive support in their learning. |
| guided pupil practice and understanding                   | Pupils are given time to practice new skills and learning, ask questions and are given feedback to correct. Supports are used to help learning and memory.  |
| Independent practice                                      | Independent practice is equivalent to overlearning and ensures that new material is remembered.   |

These strategies are adjusted to recognise the skills, interests and prior learning of individual pupils.

#### 4.5

Teaching assistants effectively consolidate and accelerate children's progress, working closely with the class teacher. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups.

#### 4.6

We create learning environments which:

- Promote positive behaviours for learning
- Promote positive working relationships
- Are attractive and interesting
- Are challenging and stimulating

- Are organised, tidy and free of clutter
- Are well-resourced
- Are interactive through working walls and displays relating to curriculum and children's work

#### **4.7**

All our teachers and teaching assistants reflect on their own development and professional development needs are planned accordingly.

#### **4.8**

We believe teachers should combine a mixture of evidence-based strategies from their own practice with recommended strategies from advisory bodies/networks. We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

### **5 The school library**

We aim to ensure our school library is accessible to all pupils according to the timetable; well-stocked and clearly organised; attractive and inviting so that children become active readers and learners.

### **6. The role of subject leaders**

- To keep current with their subject curriculum updates and provide this as part of staff training and their subject action plans.
- Identifying the CPD needs for their subject and advising and supporting colleagues;
- Monitoring teaching in line with priorities agreed during performance management meetings;
- Monitoring planning and pupils' work to ensure consistency and progression;
- Contributing to the SEF and SDP for their area of responsibility;
- Management of their subject resources.

### **7. The role of governors**

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from subject leaders and the termly Headteacher's report to governors.

### **8 The role of parents**

#### **8.1**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We inform parents about what and how their children are learning:

- through regular articles in the Friday newsletter
- our school website
- by sending curriculum newsletters to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- holding termly parents' consultation meetings and publishing an annual school report in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with home learning;
- holding parents' information sessions

## 8.2

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- promote a positive and supportive attitude towards school and learning;
- ensure that their child has the best punctuality and attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child physically as well as mentally healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

## 9. The role of pupils

In order to achieve our aims, we expect that children will:

- behave appropriately as expected and set out in school behaviour policy, rules, home/school agreement, school anti-bullying charter and class agreement;
- act in accordance with our Christian values
- listen to and respect the views of others
- demonstrate positive growth mindset behaviours including perseverance, resilience and independence;
- work to the best of their ability
- ask questions to deepen their understanding and learn from mistakes;
- discuss, review and evaluate their learning.

## 10. Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

## 11. Equal opportunities

Care is given at all stages of planning to ensure the inclusion of all of our children. When necessary, additional support is planned to assist individuals or groups of children to achieve equal access to the curriculum.

